

ITKIN AN INFORMER WHO HELPED F.B.I. U.S. OFFICIALS SAY

Figure in Marcus Case Said to Have Risked Life to 'Stand Up to Mafia'

By BARNARD L. COLLIER

Herbert Itkin, one of six persons indicted in the Marcus kick-back scandal, has been described by Federal officials as an undercover agent who infiltrated the world of organized crime and reported regularly to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Mr. Itkin, now under 24-hour armed guard by Federal marshals, is to be the Government's key witness in a Federal conspiracy case. He is a co-defendant along with former Water Commissioner James L. Marcus; a reputed Mafia leader, Antonio (Tony Ducks) Corallo; Henry Fried, owner of a New York construction company; Daniel J. Motto a union leader, and Charles J. Rappaport, a former law partner of Mr. Itkin.

Mr. Itkin—called one of the most important Government informers in recent years—is described as having provided undercover information to the F.B.I. while he engaged in numerous private business ventures around the world.

There is no solid information on his motives for becoming an informer. However, one high Federal official has called the 41-year-old Manhattan lawyer a "strange" man who risked his life to "stand up to the Mafia."

An Element in Other Cases

Federal officials disclosed that Mr. Itkin was providing the Government with large quantities of "inside" information on underworld characters and their dealings. He is a potential witness, they say, in numerous criminal cases apart from the Marcus affair.

These cases are said to involve labor racketeering, gambling, bribery, income-tax evasion and a whole range of other felonies at the city, state and federal levels, some with international dimensions.

The story of Mr. Itkin's activities as an undercover agent was pieced together by The New York Times—and then confirmed by Government officials—after extensive interviews and a search of public and private documents and letters in New York, Washington, the Caribbean area and elsewhere.

Along with his activities as an undercover agent, Mr. Itkin was involved in numerous international business ventures.

Some of His Involvements

His associations and business dealings—at least those indicated by the available documents and by people who are willing to talk about him—show that his involvement was not only with Mafia figures like Corallo and public figures like Mr. Marcus, but with politicians in the Dominican Republic, coup-d'état-minded exiles from Haiti, businessmen in Miami, union officials in New York and Detroit, and gamblers in London.

Investigations are already proceeding on the basis of information Mr. Itkin has provided. Federal officials say they are hopeful that the inquiries will enable them to obtain several indictments in the near future.

Government officials would not specify whether Mr. Itkin was a paid or unpaid informant.

Government officials are quick to point out, however, that Mr. Itkin, despite his free-spending ways over the last several years, did not, as far as is known, amass a lot of money from his business activities.

"In fact," said one Federal official, "he is damned near broke, his family life is in a mess, he can't practice law and he can't do anything but wait it all out."

Concern has been expressed by some high Government officials about a disclosure of Mr. Itkin's background.

"There are many people," said one official, "who would like to discredit Mr. Itkin as a witness in this [Marcus] case and in other cases that might be made."

Edward Berke, a Washington representative of the conspiracy could not comment on the closure of Mr. Itkin.

Also of concern is the fact that Mr. Itkin's personal life is being exposed. "But we are going to serve him justice," he can testify said. Federal agents say that Mr. Itkin had already been the target of an alleged murder plot for which two long Island men are now under Federal indictment, although he has never been officially identified as the intended victim.

In a development of this aspect yesterday, Federal Judge Marvin E. Frankel ordered the Government to disclose officially who the murder target was. The indictment did not name anyone as the intended victim.

Identification Due Soon

Assistant United States Attorney Robert G. Morvillo said he would identify the alleged victim next week to the lawyers for two men indicted in the murder plot.

The two under indictment are Robert Schwartz, 43, a lawyer, of Huntington Station, L. I., and Robert Roden, 39, of Uniondale, L. I., a carpenter. No motive has ever been ascribed to the alleged plot, but it is said that it had nothing to do with the Marcus kick-back case.

Judge Frankel also ordered that the Government name the city or other place where the two men or "collaborators carried on any activities connected with 'arranging the murder' as charged in the indictment," and the names of any persons who allegedly collaborated or conspired in "arranging the murder."

Mr. Itkin's relationship with Mr. Marcus, as far as is now known, was as a friend, business partner and his personal

lawyer. City Hall officials say that Mr. Marcus introduced Mr. Itkin to other commissioners and city officials as "my lawyer."

According to some of these commissioners, Mr. Itkin made attempts afterward to meet and discuss business matters with them.

Mayor Lindsay has said that every city official who came into more than casual contact with Mr. Marcus or Mr. Itkin has reported in full to city investigators.

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case comes to trial his "real role" as an undercover agent will be made clear.

'Won't Be a Defendant'

"I won't be a defendant when the case comes up," Mr. Itkin is quoted as having told a friend. "I didn't do anything, I didn't have to do to keep from being suspect."

His current status as a defendant in the Marcus case could be changed before the trial and the charges against him could be dropped, Federal officials say.

Mr. Itkin has also told close friends that within the last five years he provided information to the Central Intelligence Agency on the activities of persons in the Dominican Republic, where he often traveled, and in Haiti, where he is also known to have had dealings.

A spokesman for the Central Intelligence Agency denied that there was anything about Mr. Itkin in its files.

Mr. Itkin appears to have been many things to many people. To some lawyers who knew him he was, as one put it, "brilliant in his law practice." Another described the swarthy, well-dressed Brooklyn Law School graduate as "normal, retiring, not one to seek the spotlight."

Called a 'Fast Talker'

But a friend describes him as "a fast-talking guy, a fast-thinking guy, who said he knew everybody and could make a deal in the blink of an eye." He added: "Herb was always on a jet going somewhere—to London, Geneva, Rome, Santo Domingo, Haiti, Puerto Rico."

Many people regard Mr. Itkin as a specialist in labor law, but several labor leaders and mediators say they know little of his activities for unions.

It was the highly publicized Marcus case, a scandal that stunned Mayor Lindsay's administration, that first brought Mr. Itkin to wide public attention.

He was charged in a Federal indictment, along with Mr. Marcus, Corallo and others, with being part of a scheme where-